

# PSY 455 PSYCHOLOGY OF THE SELF AND ATTACHMENT

Fall 2010  
Prof. Dr. Nebi Sümer

Class Meetings: M (14:40 – 15:30) B-05

Email: [nsumer@metu.edu.tr](mailto:nsumer@metu.edu.tr)

Course Assistants: Elçin Gündoğdu [elcinpsy@gmail.com](mailto:elcinpsy@gmail.com) and Ayça Özen  
[ayozen@metu.edu.tr](mailto:ayozen@metu.edu.tr)

Home page: <http://www.metu.edu.tr/~nsumer/>

**Overview:** The purpose of this course is to present an overview of the theories and research relevant to the self and attachment processes. Specifically, recent literature on the self-concept, self-esteem, and attachment from social psychological, personality, and developmental perspectives will be covered. The course will also include issues on how the self and attachment are related and how they interact in influencing psychological functioning throughout the life span. Especially, cultural differences on the structure and the functioning of the self-concept and attachment processes will be extensively discussed. Some of topics covered in this course are as follows: The nature of the self, development of the self, self-esteem, predictors of low self-esteem, basic strategies in protecting self-esteem, self-regulation, attachment in early years and its role in close relationships, and the link between the self and attachment dynamics.

In addition to assigned articles, chapters from following books will be used

- a. Brown, J. D. (1998). *The Self*. California: McGraw-Hill
- b. Colin, V.L. (1996). *Human Attachment*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- c. Baumeister, R. F. (1999). (Ed.). *The self in social psychology*. Levittown, PA: Psychology Press.
- d. Baumeister, R. F. (1993). (Ed.) *Self-Esteem: The puzzle of low self-regard*. New York: Plenum Press.
- e. Cassidy, J & Shaver, P.R. (2008). *Handbook of attachment*. New York: Guilford Press

**Note:** Other than several chapters from the above books, a number of articles are required for this course. Please see “course schedule” for the assigned chapters and additional readings.

## Course Requirements:

This course will be a seminar style class. Therefore, attendance is expected and participation is essential.

Reading the assigned materials is very imperative to this course to be able to follow what is covered in a given day and to get more out of the lecture. Therefore, I'd like every student to attend all classes and to read the assigned chapters and/or articles, and to prepare critical questions relevant to the covered topics prior to the lectures. I also would like you to participate in the class discussions and raise questions as much as possible. Your participation in class discussions and your contribution to the lectures by reviewing and bringing recent publications in the related areas or by making good comments will definitely be rewarded as extra points added to the final exam or to the assignments.

In addition to presenting an article in the class, you will be responsible for preparing one report on “application-implication” and a literature review/presentation paper throughout the semester. Although I strongly encourage you to study together and exchange ideas with your classmates, it is very important for you to know that you should NOT cooperate or share

information with others in the process of preparing the reports or the literature review paper. In order to evaluate you fairly at the end of the semester, I have to make sure that your paper reflects your own individual performance. Main topics and the details of these reports and review paper will be explained in the class. Followings are the specific course requirements.

1. **Article Presentation:** Once during the semester each student will be responsible for presenting an empirical article or a short review paper, mostly selected from Current Directions in Psychological Science (See the list below). Each student will chose an article corresponding to the given day's class topic from the list. You should elaborate the article in detail and prepare a brief presentation to the class. The presentation should be short, maximum 10 minutes. Students are expected to focus on the main themes/issues examined in the paper, rather than the details. You should briefly explain the main topic, hypotheses, methods, and main findings including how the hypotheses are tested. You should clarify the implications and contributions of the chosen article to the current knowledge and potential limitations. This is worth of 10 point.

Note: Please chose your article from the list below (or find by yourself and get my opinion) and send an email to the course assistant to schedule a time for presentation by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

2. **Quizzes:** You will take a total of 6 (pop) mini-quizzes in different (randomly determined) weeks. You will be asked 2-3 very short questions from the given week's readings. One quiz with the lowest grade will be excluded and remaining 5 quizzes will add to 15 points. So each quiz will worth 3 points. As you'd easily guess the purpose of theses quizzes is to make sure that you read the assigned materials and prepare for the class.
3. **Short Report on Applications/Implications:** You need to prepare a short report on the possible application of what you have learned from a given topic and what are the implications of the course for the public, parents, and teachers. In these reports, specifically, I'd like to think about how the materials we cover in the course can be applied to some practical situations, how parents and teachers can utilize this information in their child-rearing practices and/or education. The short reports must be 3- 4 pages long (double-spaced and typed). The report is worth 10 points. The deadline for the short report is specified in the schedule below.
4. **Empirical Review:** You will prepare a small review paper on one of the critical topics relevant to the course content. For this project, specifically, you will choose one of the topics listed below or one of your own ideas that I endorse. The basis of your final project will be a critical reading the scientific literature. This will incorporate in a 2,500-word (excluding references) critical literature review summarizing and synthesizing five or more empirical articles on self and/or attachment related issues. The paper must adhere to APA style. Final copies of the papers will be due on assigned Final Exam time. The purpose of the paper is to familiarize you with scientific studies in their original form as published by the researchers. A second goal is to give you experience with interpreting, synthesizing, and drawing conclusions about a number of studies addressing a very specific topic. Please read the format given below for this paper. The paper is worth 20 point.
5. **Presentation of Empirical Review:** You will be asked to present your review paper at the end of semester within 10-minute periods. Presentation is worth 5 points; the

evaluation of the presentation will be based on your actual presentation performance in the class rather than the associated paper that you will give at the end of the semester.

6. **Examinations:** Two examinations, a midterm and a comprehensive final, are scheduled. Both of the exams will be in the essay format (including about 10 questions). I tend to ask general questions in exams which aim to assess a student's ability to integrate given materials, the degree of sophistication in his/her own ideas, and the ability make connections to daily experiences from an abstracted or conceptual issue. Each exam is worth 20 points.
7. **Class Participation:** Part of the class experience involves sharing your ideas and hearing the ideas expressed by your fellow students. Articulating and defending your ideas is an important part of the learning process. To do that, off course you should regularly attend the class. You are expected to participate fully in discussion in every class. Five points in final evaluation will be devoted to the participation as bonus credit.

### Summary of Grading:

1. Article presentation	10 %
2. Quizzes	15 (3 points each)
3. Short report/application	10
4. Empirical review	20
5. Presentation of the review	5
6. Exam. Midterm	20
7. Exam. Final	20
8. Participation	5 (as bonus credit)
TOTAL	105 %

### **Course Schedule and Reading List**

1. **February 22**, Get to know each other. Introduction to Self and Attachment Theories
2. **March 1, Nature and Development of the self**
  - a. James, W. (1890). The self.
  - b. Leary, M. L., & Tangney, J. P. (2003). The Self as an Organizing Construct in the Behavioral and Social Sciences. In M. R. Leary and J. P. Tangney (Eds.) Handbook of Self and Identity. The Guilford Press New York.
  - c. Brown, Ch.2. The nature of the self
3. **March 8. Self-Development and cognitive aspects**
  - a. Brown. J. Ch. 4. Self-development
  - b. Brown Ch. 5. The self from a cognitive perspective
4. **March 15. Executive Function of the self**
  - a. Baumeister, R. F., & Vobs, K. D. (2003). Self-regulation and the executive function of the self. In M. R. Leary and J. P. Tangney (Eds.) Handbook of Self and Identity. The Guilford Press New York.
  - b. Baumeister, R. (2000): Ego Depletion and the Self's Executive Function. In A.Tesser,T. B. Felson, & J M. Suls (Eds.). *Psychological Perspectives on Self and Identity*.
5. **March 22. Self-esteem**
  - a. Brown Ch. 8 Self-esteem,

- b. Kernis, M. H. (2003). Toward a conceptualization of optimal self-esteem. *Target Article. Psychological Inquiry*, 14, 1-26.
  - c. Baumeister (1993). Ch.11. (Baumeister). Understanding the inner nature of low self-esteem: Uncertain, fragile, protective, and conflicted.
- 6. March 29. Need for Self-esteem. Terror Management Theory**
- a. Leary, M., Tambor, E.S., Terdal, S. K., & Downs, D. (1995). Self-esteem as an interpersonal monitor: Sociometer hypothesis. *JPSP*, 68, 518-530.
  - b. Pyszynski, T., Solomon, S., Greenberg, J. (2003). Terror Management Theory: An evolutionary existential account of human behavior. In T. Pyszynski, S. Solomon., & J. Greenberg, *In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror* (Chapter 2). APA, Washington, DC.
- 7. April 5. Formation of Attachment Bond and Basics of Attachment Theory**
- a. Cassidy, J. (2008). The nature of the child's ties. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 3-20). New York: Guilford Press.
  - b. Bretherton, I. (1992). The origins of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Developmental Psychology*, 28, 759-775.
  - c. Colins, W. C. (1996). Human Attachment. Chapter 4. Phases in the Development of attachment in infancy.
- 8. April 12. Individual differences in Attachment and Maternal Sensitivity**
- a. Weinfield, N. S., Sroufe, L. A., Egeland, B., & Carlson, E. (2008). Individual differences in infant-caregiver attachment: Conceptual and empirical aspects of security. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed., pp. 78-101). New York: Guilford Press.
  - b. De Wolff, M. S., & van IJzendoorn, M. H. (1997). Sensitivity and attachment: A meta-analysis on parental antecedents of infant attachment. *Child Development*, 68, 571-591.
  - c. Sümer, N., Selçuk, E., Günaydın, G., Salman, S., & Harma, M. (2008). Maternal Sensitivity and Child Security in Turkish Culture. Sempozyum, 20th Biennial Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD), Würzburg, Almanya, 13 - 17 Temmuz, 2008. (PPT will be presented)
- 9. April 19. Internal Working Models and Later functioning in Attachment (MIDTERM 16:30-17:30)**
- a. Belsky, J., & Fearon, R.M.P. (2008). Precursors of attachment security. In J. Cassidy & P.R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment* (pp. 295–316). New York: Guilford.
  - b. Thompson, R. A. (2008). Early attachment and later development. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 348-365). New York: Guilford Press.
- 10. April 26. Attachment in Adulthood**
- a. Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P.R. (2007). Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics, and change. Ch. 2. New York: Guilford Press.
  - b. Feeney, J.A. (2008). Adult romantic attachment: Development in the study of couple relationships. In J. Cassidy & P. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment theory and research*. pp. 456-481. New York: Guilford Press
  - c. Sümer, N. (2006). Yetişkin bağlanma ölçeklerinin kategoriler ve boyutlar düzeyinde karşılaştırılması, *Türk Psikoloji Dergisi*, 21, 1-22.

### **11. May 3. New Trends and Applications in Attachment Theory**

- a. Gillath, O., Selcuk, E., & Shaver, P. R. (2008). Moving toward a secure attachment style: Can repeated security priming help? *Social and Personality Compass*, 2/4, 1651-1666.
- b. Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007). Boosting attachment security to promote mental health, prosocial values, and inter-group tolerance. *Psychological Inquiry*, 18, 139-156.
- c. Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2005). Attachment security, compassion, and altruism. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 34-38.

### **12. May 10. Cultural perspectives in attachment and self**

- a. Cross, S. E., & Gore, J. S. (2003). Cultural models of the self. In M. R. Leary & J. P. Tagney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (pp. 536-566). New York: The Guilford Press.
- b. Rothbaum, F., Weisz, J., Pott, Kazuo, M., & Morelli, G. (2000). Attachment and culture: Security in the United States and Japan. *American Psychologist*, 55, 1093-1104.
- c. Sümer, N & Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç. (2010). Culturally Relevant Parenting Predictors of Attachment Security: Perspectives from Turkey. In P. Erdman & N. Kok-Mun (Eds.). *Attachment: Expanding the Cultural Connections*. pp 158-177. Routledge Press.

### **13. May 17. Empirical Review Papers –Presentations I**

### **14. May 24. Empirical Review Papers- Presentations II**

#### **List of Articles Suggested for Article Presentation**

1. Cassidy, J. (1988). Child mother attachment and the self in sixyears-olds. *Child Development*, 59, 121-134.
2. La Guardia, J. G., Ryan, R. M., Couchman, C. E., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Within-person variation in security of attachment: A self-determination theory perspective on attachment, need fulfillment, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 367-384.
3. Goldenberg, J. L., Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., (2000). Fleeing the body: A terror management perspective on the problem of human corporeality. *Personality & Social Psychology Review*, 4, pp. 200-218.
4. Vohs, K. D. & Heatherton, T. F. (2000). Self-regulatory failure: A resource-depletion approach. *Psychological Science*, 11, 3, 249-254.
5. Bylsma, W. H., Cozzarelli, C., & Sümer, N. (1997). Relation between adult attachment styles and global self-esteem. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 19, 1-16.
6. Baumeister, R.F., Campbell, J.D., Krueger, J. I., & Vohs K.D. (2005). Exploding the self-esteem myth. *Scientific American*, 292, 84- 91.
7. Baccus J.R., Baldwin, M.W., & Packer, D.J. (2004). Increasing implicit self-esteem through classical conditioning. *Psychological Science*, 15, 498-502.
8. Leary, M.R. (1999). Making sense of self-esteem. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 8, 32-35.
9. Pelham, B.W., Carvallo, M., & Jones, J.T. (2005). Implicit egotism. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 106-110.
10. Dijksterhuis, A., & Nordgren, L. F. (2006). A theory of unconscious thought. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 1, 95-109.
11. Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., & Pyszczynski, T. (2000). Pride and Prejudice: Fear of death and social behavior. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 200-204.

12. Cohen, F., Solomon, S., Maxfield, M., Pyszczynski, T., & Greenberg, J. (2004). Fatal attraction: The effects of mortality salience on the evaluations of charismatic, task-oriented, and relationship oriented leaders. *Psychological Science, 15*, 846-851.
13. Nickerson, C., Schwarz, N., Diener, E., & Kahneman, D. (2003). Zeroing in on the dark side of the American dream: A closer look at the negative consequences of the goal for financial success. *Psychological Science, 14*, 531-536.
14. Baumeister, R. F., Bushman, B. J., & Campbell, W. K. (2000). Self-esteem, narcissism, and aggression: Does violence result from low self-esteem or from threatened egotism? *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 9*, 26-29.
15. Sümer, N., & Cozzarelli, C. (2004). The impact of adult attachment on partner and self-attributions and relationship quality. *Personal Relationships, 11*, 355-371.
16. Sümer, N., & Anafarta, M. (2009). Orta Çocukluk Döneminde Ebeveynlere Bağlanma, Benlik Algısı ve Kaygı. *Türk Psikoloji Dergisi, 24*, 86-101]
17. Myrseth, K.O.R., & Fishbach, A. (2009). Self-control a function of knowing when and how to exercise restraint. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 18*, 247-251.
18. Roisman, G.I. (2009). Adult attachment: Toward a rapprochement of methodological cultures. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 18*, 122-126.
19. Davies, P. T., & Woitach, M. J. (2008). Children's Emotional Security in the Interparental Relationship. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 17*, 269-274.
20. Pelham, B. W., Carvallo, M., & Jones, J. T. (2005). Implicit egotism. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 14*, 106-110.
21. Pomerantz, E. M., & Wang, Q. (2009). The Role of Parental Control in Children's Development in Western and East Asian Countries. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 18*, 285-290.
22. Pyszczynski, T., Rothschild, Z. & Abdolhossein, A. (2008). Terrorism, Violence, and Hope for Peace: A Terror Management Perspective. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 17*, 318-322.
23. Waters, E., Weinfield, N.S., & Hamilton, C.E. (2000). The stability of attachment security from infancy to adolescence and early adulthood: General discussion. *Child Development, 71*, 703-706.

### **Suggestions Review Topics**

1. Self-competence and self-esteem in children (Harter)
2. Mental models of attachment and relationships attributions
3. Cultural differences in early attachment bond
4. Self-esteem and attachment security
5. Effect of daycare on attachment security
6. Attachment and multiple caregiving
7. Father Attachment
8. Loneliness, and attachment
9. Adult attachment and violence in relationships
10. Attachment and friendship
11. Attachment studies on Turkish samples
12. Child rearing patterns in Turkish culture
13. Cognitive-affective crossfire and attachment
14. Attachment and coping with earthquake trauma
15. Defensive pessimism and attachment
16. Attachment in middle childhood
17. Attachment in adolescents

## **Recommendations on writing empirical review**

The paper should provide a review of at least five articles relevant to the topic you chose. The paper should have a conclusion/discussion section in which you discuss the implications of the findings of the reviewed articles. Each article that you use should be relevant to a focused theme. In other words, you should make sure that the topic is as narrow as possible and all of the articles are directly related to the selected topic.

The paper should be organized in the following sections and follow the APA Publication Manual guidelines.

### A very brief overview of APA guidelines:

**Title Page:** The title should be mostly 13-15 words long, and should summarize the main idea of the paper as briefly and informatively as possible.

**Abstract:** Briefly summarize the contents of the paper in 75-100 words. State the topic, purpose and the main ideas of the paper, type of sources used, and the conclusions and implications. The abstract is presented on a separate page following the title page.

**Body of Paper:** The main part of the paper begins on the third page. This part should begin with an introductory paragraph setting out the problem that will be examined in the paper and establishing the theoretical importance or significance of the problem. The first sentence should be a restatement of the hypothesis of your paper presented in the abstract. The topic should be streamlined and narrowed down as you get the main ideas, conclusions, propositions, hypotheses and/or final statements. State your ideas in a simple and clear format by using scientific terms depending on exactly what conclusions or questions you are addressing in the paper.

The main part of the paper should consist of a review of the articles on your topic, including summaries of their hypotheses, methods, results, and conclusions. In summarizing or presenting the articles, give enough information about the methods used and the findings so that it is clear what the results mean. Give more general studies first, and then move on to more specific studies about your topic. You should organize the material in such a way that it is more than simply a string of summaries of the articles. Make connections between the presented studies.

**Conclusion/Discussion:** This section of the paper follows the main part of the paper described above. Start off by summarizing the hypotheses, methods, results, and authors' conclusions of the reviewed studies. Most importantly, indicate whether the presented studies as a group support or refute your expectations, what they simply say. Discuss the general implications of the findings of the articles you have reviewed, specify the contribution of the studies. Present your relevant criticisms if you have any on the basis of scientific attitudes rather than giving emotional reactions to the reviewed studies.

**References:** List only the references you have cited in the paper.

### Important Note: WRITE IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

Don't copy material from books, articles, even relatively small amounts. Don't plagiarize. You need to cite your own ideas. In the rare instance where you want to quote a source, put the quoted material in quotation marks and cite (i.e., tell where you got it from). Plagiarism will definitely result in course failure.